

AGENDA

US Environmental Protection Agency Public Meeting

Draft EPA Information Quality Guidelines

May 15, 2002, 9:00 - 4:30pm, EPA East Building: formerly the Interstate Commerce Commission Building (ICC), 1201 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 1153, Washington, D.C

Please note: The time for the afternoon topic discussions may be reduced to accommodate additional speakers who wish to present prepared comments.

9:00 - 9:20am

Introductions of the EPA panel

Elaine Stanley, Director, Office of Information Analysis and Access, Office of Environmental Information, US EPA

Opening Remarks

Kim Nelson, Chief Information Officer, Assistant Administrator for the Office of Environmental Information, US EPA

9:20- 9:30am

Public meeting agenda review, ground rules

Facilitator: James Whitaker, Marasco Newton Group

9:30 - 12:00pm

Presentation of prepared comments by members of the public

12:00 - 1:00pm

Lunch break

1:00 - 3:30pm Public comment by topic area:

Moderated by facilitator: James Whitaker, Marasco Newton Group

Influential Information *(time allotted: 30 minutes)*

“Influential,” when used in the phrase “influential scientific, financial, or statistical information,” means that the Agency can reasonably determine that dissemination of the information will have or does have a clear and substantial impact on important public policies or important private sector decisions. Consistent with OMB’s guidance, EPA has chosen to identify influential information in terms of specific classes of information that are developed and reviewed through Agency-wide processes.

- Is this an appropriate approach?
- Is the scope of information too broad?
- Are there other classes of information that should be included?

EPA intends to develop experience implementing its definition of influential information over the first year, and then potentially broaden it to incorporate other classes of information disseminated by EPA.

- Is this an appropriate approach and consistent with the goal to continually improve Agency information?

Reproducibility *(time allotted: 30 minutes)*

Influential scientific, financial, or statistical information generally has a higher degree of quality, in particular, transparency that facilitates the reproducibility of the information by qualified third parties.

- What comments do you have on the Agency's approach to facilitating the reproducibility of influential information?
- Is it appropriate for the influential scientific, financial, and statistical information EPA disseminates?
- What types of original and supporting data do you believe should or should not be subject to a reproducibility requirement given ethical, feasibility, or confidentiality constraints?
- What suggestions do you have for performing and reporting robustness checks of influential analytic results in cases where public access to data and methods will not occur due to other compelling interests such as privacy, trade secrets, intellectual property, and other confidentiality protections?
- In particular, how might such robustness checks be applied to third party data that are used in analyses included in influential scientific, financial, and statistical information disseminated by EPA?

Influential risk assessment *(time allotted: 30 minutes)*

EPA has adapted the SDWA quality principles for influential scientific risk assessments regarding human health risks and would like to hear from you on this issue.

- What suggestions do you have with respect to the EPA adaptation of the SDWA principles for influential scientific risk assessments regarding human health risks?
- Do you think that an adaptation of the SDWA quality principles is appropriate for most influential scientific risk assessments regarding human health risks disseminated by EPA?

EPA has decided to adapt the SDWA quality principles in the future for environmental and safety risk assessments. This will enable EPA to inform its decisions on how to best address this issue based on public input.

- What suggestions do you have for how EPA should address environmental and safety risk assessments?
- How do you think EPA should adapt the SDWA principles to accommodate these different risk assessments?
- Or, if you do not believe that EPA should adapt these principles, how would you suggest EPA address environmental and safety risk assessments in its quality guidelines?

Sources of Information Disseminated by EPA *(time allotted: 30 minutes)*

During the development of these guidelines, EPA considered how to address information that is not generated by the Agency, but is later disseminated by EPA in a publication or through a regulatory or policy decision. Although this information may not be covered by these guidelines when it is first generated by outside sources, it may be covered by the guidelines if the Agency subsequently decided to use the information in a publication or policy decision.

- EPA would like you to suggest specific assessment factors that the Agency should consider using when assessing specific kinds of information submitted to EPA by outside sources, or information EPA obtains from outside sources.
- EPA also requests your input on how it should properly consult with the scientific and technical community in establishing these assessment factors.

Complaint Resolution *(time allotted: 30 minutes)*

EPA has developed a complaint resolution process. That is, your initial complaint would be heard by what EPA calls the "information owner". That "information owner" is the EPA person designated by management in the EPA program, or who has the responsibility for the quality, objectivity, utility and integrity of the information disseminated by EPA. Next, should you appeal the initial decision, your appeal would be heard by the Assistant Administrator (AA) or Regional Administrator (RA) for that program or region. The AA and RA are the highest ranking official for those organizations. They are political appointees. That appeal would be decided in collaboration with a standing panel. That panel would consist of other AAs and RAs to ensure that your appeal is taken to a most senior level right away. The EPA Chief Information Officer would chair that panel. There are many more details that EPA has yet to decide and the Agency encourages your input as it develops this proposal.

- Specifically, what suggestions do you have regarding the receipt of the initial complaint through the Office of Environmental Information? Do you think a central point of entry is useful or problematic?
- What are appropriate time periods for this process?
- Once an appeal is submitted it would be decided by a top EPA official in collaboration with an executive panel. Do you think this is sufficiently objective and efficient to ensure a timely and appropriate response to an appeal?

3:30 - 4:00pm **Other issues for discussion**

4:00 - 4:30pm **Closing remarks and meeting follow up by EPA**

Elaine Stanley, US EPA, Director, Office of Information Analysis and Access, Office of Environmental Information